

DIANE DE POLIGNAC

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE (1930-2002)



Niki de Saint Phalle was a self-taught French-American artist. Expressing herself through various media, Niki de Saint Phalle was a visual artist, painter, sculptor, film director and author. Bilingual in French and English, she formed an essential link between French and American artists in Paris. Niki de Saint Phalle became part of the Nouveau Réalisme movement.

BIOGRAPHY

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE'S EARLY LIFE

Niki de Saint Phalle (born Catherine Marie-Agnès Fal de Saint Phalle) was born in Neuilly-sur-Seine on October 29th, 1930 to an American mother (Jeanne-Jacqueline Harper) and a French father (André Marie Fal de Saint-Phalle). Niki de Saint Phalle grew up in New York, travelling regularly to France to visit her family. She became a model, her photographs appearing in *Vogue* and *Life* magazines. Niki de Saint Phalle married her childhood friend Harry Mathews at the age of 18 years old.

Niki de Saint Phalle painted her first works in 1950, while her husband was studying music at Harvard. The couple's first child, Laura, was born in 1951. The following year, the family moved to Paris, where Niki de Saint Phalle studied theatre. The family spent the summer in the South of France, Spain and Italy, where Niki de Saint Phalle visited museums and cathedrals.

THE ARTIST NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE'S EARLY WORKS

In 1953, Niki de Saint Phalle was hospitalised for depression. Painting helped her to overcome her illness and she decided to become an artist. In her own words: "I started painting in the madhouse, where I learnt how to translate emotions, fear, violence, hope and joy into painting. It was through creation that I discovered the sombre depths of depression, and how to overcome it." A self-taught artist, in this respect Niki de Saint Phalle was similar to outsider artists. She would indeed become very close to Jean Dubuffet, the theorist behind the Art Brut movement. In Paris, Niki de Saint Phalle was encouraged to pursue her chosen path by the artists she met. The family then moved to Mallorca, where Niki and Harry had their second child in 1955: Phillip.

Saint Phalle's family later returned to Paris, where she met the artist Jean Tinguely, with whom she began to work. Niki de Saint Phalle was also deeply affected by the works of Paul Klee, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso and Henri Rousseau. She visited the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, where she discovered works by Jasper Johns, Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock and Robert Rauschenberg.

Niki and Harry separated in 1960. The artist then moved into her studio alone. A number of Niki de Saint Phalle's works were included in a group exhibition at the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris. Niki de Saint Phalle and Jean Tinguely moved in together, sharing the same studio.

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE & THE TIRS SERIES

In the early 1960s, Niki de Saint Phalle created her *Tirs* [Shooting Paintings] works: they consisted of structures composed of containers filled with paint, on to which the artist would shoot with a rifle to create projections on the canvas. As such, the *Tirs* pieces combined pictorial art and performance art. Niki de Saint Phalle was close to a number of notable American artists living in Paris, including Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns, Larry Rivers, Shirley Goldfarb and James Metcalf, whom she invited to participate in the series.

She also collaborated with the French artists Gérard Deschamps and Raymond Hains in creating her *Tirs* pieces.

Niki de Saint Phalle became part of the Nouveau Réalisme [New Realism] movement, a group of artists that brought together Arman, Christo, Yves Klein, Jean Tinguely and Jacques de la Villeglé, among others. Perfectly bilingual, she became a privileged link between French and American artists living in Paris.

Niki de Saint Phalle's first solo exhibition was held at the Galerie J in Paris in 1961. In that year, Niki de Saint Phalle's *Tirs* were made famous by the Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (ORTF) *En français dans le texte* programme. The journalist Catherine Gonnard observed that Niki de Saint Phalle was "a leading figure of the avant-garde on television." Thanks to her prior experience as a model, she was at ease in front of the cameras. The art critic and founder of the Nouveau Réalisme movement, Pierre Restany, "used his exceptional understanding of imagery to promote the new avant-garde (...) in particular at the screening of a documentary entitled *Un certain art...* which presented James Metcalf, Jean Tinguely and Niki de Saint Phalle." It was as such that a *Tir* work was enacted in front of the cameras of the American news agency United Press International.

Through Marcel Duchamp, Niki de Saint Phalle and Jean Tinguely met the surrealist artist Salvador Dalí—with whom they travelled to Spain.

In the same year, Niki de Saint Phalle took part in the exhibition *The Art of Assemblage* at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. In February 1962, Niki de Saint Phalle and Jean Tinguely travelled to California, Nevada and Mexico, where the two artists took part in various exhibitions and cultural events. On their return to France, the couple settled in the Paris region, where Niki de Saint Phalle began creating figurative sculptures of women (some giving birth, others representing brides), as well as dragons and monsters.

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE & THE NANAS SERIES

Niki de Saint Phalle created her first *Nana* in 1965, inspired by the pregnancy of the actress Clarice Rivers—wife of the artist Larry Rivers. Entitled *Gwendoline* (Musée Tinguely, Basel), the sculpture represented an archetypal female form. Niki de Saint Phalle further developed the theme, her *Nanas* evolving into giant round women in dancing positions.

The first exhibition of Niki de Saint Phalle's *Nanas* was held at the Galerie Iolas in Paris in September 1966. The artist published her first book for the occasion.

In the same year, the *Nanas* were incorporated into a ballet by Roland Petit entitled *Éloge de la folie*. Presented at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, the ballet was a triumph. It featured *Nana* figures on rods held up by dancers, as well as set designs by Niki de Saint Phalle, Jean Tinguely and Martial Raysse.

In the following year, Niki de Saint Phalle created a gigantic *Nana* for the Moderna Museet in Stockholm. Measuring 28 m long, 9 m wide and 6 m high, this reclining *Nana* was entitled *Hon* ("She" in Swedish). Visitors could enter the sculpture of the woman through an entrance between her legs. With its powerful symbolism, the piece attracted considerable attention. Niki de Saint Phalle's first monumental work, the piece reinforced her desire to create a sculpture garden.

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE'S INHABITABLE ARCHITECTURE

In 1971, Niki de Saint Phalle received her first architectural commission—for a house in the South of France—after which she travelled to India and Egypt. Niki de Saint Phalle and Jean Tinguely were married in the same year.

In 1972, Niki de Saint Phalle received a second private architectural commission for a project in Belgium. She worked on the project with the Haligon workshop—a partnership that would continue with collaborations on large-scale sculpture projects as well as work in editions.

In 1999, Niki de Saint Phalle began work on the design of the *Grotto* in the royal Herrenhausen Gardens in Hanover. Consisting of three rooms, the *Grotto* was decorated with mosaics made of white and gold mirrors, blue and black pieces of glass, multicoloured stones, and red, yellow and orange glassware. All of the mosaics were adorned with figures on the theme of *The Life of Man*.

THE ARTIST NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE'S MONUMENTAL SCULPTURES

Niki de Saint Phalle's passion for monumental sculptures illustrated her desire to go beyond the confines of the museum to create works of art accessible to all.

Niki de Saint Phalle worked together with Jean Tinguely on *Le Paradis Fantastique*—a commission for the French Pavilion at the 1967 Universal and International Exhibition in Montreal, Canada. The piece was made up of nine monumental sculptures by Niki de Saint Phalle, six kinetic sculptures and six machines by Jean Tinguely. In the installation, the works of the two artists are staged to confront each other, "in competition". During the production of the sculptures, Niki de Saint Phalle was exposed to toxic gases from the heated polystyrene. The damage this caused to her lungs resulted in recurring health problems for the artist. Directly inspired by the piece *Hon*, *Le Paradis Fantastique* was transferred to the Moderna Museet in Stockholm in 1971.

In 1973, Niki de Saint Phalle was commissioned to create a monumental sculpture for Rabinovitch Park in Jerusalem. It was called *Golem*. Designed for children, the work was a fantastical monster with tongues that served as playground slides.

In 1974, Niki de Saint Phalle created three monumental *Nanas* for the city of Hanover in Germany. The inhabitants of the city nicknamed them Sophie, Charlotte and Caroline in homage to three historical figures of the city.

In 1982, Niki de Saint Phalle and Jean Tinguely worked together on a fountain project for the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. The work was called the *Fontaine Stravinsky* in a tribute to the Russian composer. Jean Tinguely died in Bern in 1991. To commemorate his life, Niki de Saint Phalle created her first kinetic sculptures: the *Meta-Tinguelys*.

The artist Niki de Saint Phalle worked with the architect Mario Botta on her *Noah's Ark* project in Jerusalem—a park in which animal sculptures serve as children's playground games. The park was opened in 2000.

Niki de Saint Phalle's last monumental sculpture project was *Queen Califa's Magical Circle*: a sculpture park located in Escondido, California. Named after Califa, an Amazon warrior who is an important figure in California culture, the park features a labyrinth and ten large-scale sculptures. The symbolism used by Niki de Saint Phalle in the pieces was inspired by Native American culture. Work began on the park in 2000 and it was inaugurated in 2003.

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE & THE TAROT GARDEN

Suffering from a pulmonary disease, Niki de Saint Phalle was hospitalised in Switzerland in 1974, where she was reunited with her collector friend Marella Caracciolo Agnelli. Niki de Saint Phalle shared her desire to build a sculpture garden with her friend, whose family subsequently gave her a plot of land in Garavicchio in Tuscany to realise the project.

Niki de Saint Phalle devoted herself to the creation of her *Tarot Garden* for nearly twenty years. The foundations were laid in 1978 and the construction of the first sculptures began in 1980. Niki de Saint Phalle joined forces with the architect Mario Botta for the project. The construction of the garden was financed by sales of editions.

The collection of works in the park was based on the twenty-two Major Arcana in the game of tarot. Completed in 1993, it was opened to the public in 1998. Constructed using metal frames covered with concrete, the sculptures were decorated with polychrome ceramics, mirror mosaics and glass. Measuring fifteen metres high, the largest pieces became real sculpture houses.

Niki de Saint Phalle's inspiration for the *Tarot Garden* came in part from the architect Antoni Gaudí and his creations, such as the Parc Güell in Barcelona. She was also inspired by the Sacro Bosco, or Park of the Monsters, in Bomarzo and the Palais idéal du Facteur Cheval (the "Ideal Palace" of the French postman Ferdinand Cheval), which was built in Hauterives in the Drôme region of France. In a letter to Jean Tinguely, Niki de Saint Phalle wrote: "I was telling you about Gaudí and the postman Cheval, whom I had just discovered and who had become my heroes: they represented the beauty of man, alone in his madness, without any intermediaries, museums or galleries. I provoked you by telling you that the postman Cheval was a much greater sculptor than you. 'I've never heard of the fool,' you said, insisting 'Let's go and see him at once.' So we did, and the discovery of this marginal creative force gave you tremendous satisfaction. You were seduced by the poetry and fanaticism of this simple postman, who had realised his immense and crazy dream."

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE: A SOCIALLY ENGAGED WOMAN ARTIST

The artist Niki de Saint Phalle gave her support to many causes. One remarkable way she did so was by creating lithographs to support the Temporary Contemporary Museum in Los Angeles in 1983. The profits from the sales of the works were donated to research in the fight against AIDS. This particular cause was very close to Niki de Saint Phalle's heart. She was involved with AIDS prevention and education work throughout her life.

In 1987, in collaboration with Dr Silvio Barandun, Niki de Saint Phalle wrote and illustrated the book *AIDS: You Can't Catch It Holding Hands*, which was published in seven different languages.

Also committed to defending the rights of African Americans, Niki de Saint Phalle created a series of sculptures entitled *Black Heroes*, representing athletes and musicians such as Miles Davis and Louis Armstrong.

NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE'S OTHER PROJECTS

The self-taught artist Niki de Saint Phalle expressed herself through a diverse range of media. In 1972, for example, Niki de Saint Phalle created her first designs for the jeweller GEM Montebello in Milan. She also made two films: *Daddy* in 1974 and then *Un rêve plus long que la nuit* in 1975. In 1980, Saint Phalle began creating her first chairs, vases and lamps.

In 1982, Niki de Saint Phalle created an eponymous perfume, the bottle of which was decorated with two intertwined snakes. Marketed by the Jaqueline Cochran Company, the perfume was used to finance part of the *Tarot Garden* project.

As part of a worldwide touring kite exhibition in 1988, Niki de Saint Phalle created a gigantic kite with a design she had developed in the mid-1970s: *Oiseau amoureux*.

THE ARTIST NIKI DE SAINT PHALLE'S LEGACY

In 2000, Niki de Saint Phalle was awarded the Praemium Imperiale prize in Japan—a prize awarded since 1989 by the Imperial Family of Japan on behalf of the Japan Art Association. Awarded annually for outstanding contributions to the development, promotion and progress of the arts, the prize is considered the equivalent of the Nobel Prize in this field. In 2001, the artist Niki de Saint Phalle donated 190 works to the city of Nice.

Niki de Saint Phalle died on May 21st, 2002 in La Jolla, California. The Niki Charitable Art Foundation is now responsible for the promotion and protection of Niki de Saint Phalle's works.

The *Grotto* in the royal Herrenhausen Gardens in Hanover was inaugurated in March 2003, in conjunction with an exhibition of the works Niki de Saint Phalle had donated to the Sprengel Museum in Hanover, which had made her an honorary citizen.

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SELECTED COLLECTIONS

Aalborg (Denmark), Kunsten Museum of Modern Art
Amherst, MA, Mead Art Museum at Amherst College
Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum
Angers, Musée des Beaux-Arts
Antibes, Musée Picasso
Athens, Basil & Elise Goulandris Foundation
Baden-Baden, Museum Frieder Burda
Basel, Museum Tinguely
Bern, The Museum of Drawers
Bern, Tiefenau Spital
Bratislava, Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum
Champaign, IL, Krannert Art Museum, University of Illinois
Charlotte, NC, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art
Chicago, IL, Museum of Contemporary Art
Chicago, IL, Robert B. Mayer Memorial Loan Collection
Chur (Switzerland), Würth International AG
Cologne, Ludwig Collection at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum
Darmstadt, Hessisches Landesmuseum
Dublin, Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art
Duisburg, Wilhelm Lehmbrock Museum
Dunkirk, Lieu d'Art et Action Contemporaine (LAAC)
Düren, Museumsverein Leopold-Hoesch-Museum
Evanston, IL, Block Museum of Art, Northwestern University
Flassans-sur-Issole (France), Commanderie de Peyrassol
Fribourg, Espace Jean Tinguely – Niki de Saint Phalle
Fribourg, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire
Geneva, Fondation Gandur pour l'Art
Geneva, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire de la Ville de Genève
Glasgow, Gallery of Modern Art
Glasgow, McLellan Galleries
Gyeongju (South Korea), Wooyang Museum of Contemporary Art
Hakone (Japan), The Hakone Open-Air Museum
Hanover, Sprengel Museum
Helsinki, Didrichsen Art Museum
Houston, TX, The Menil Collection
Houston, TX, The Museum of Fine Arts
Humblebaek (Denmark), Louisiana Museum of Modern Art
Jerusalem, Jerusalem Foundation
Jerusalem, Israel Museum
Kirishima (Japan), Kirishima Open-Air Museum
Koblenz, Ludwig Museum at the Deutschherrenhaus
Kruishoutem (Belgium), Fondation Veranneman
La Jolla, CA, Museum of Contemporary Art
Lausanne, Olympic Museum
Linz (Austria), Lentos Kunstmuseum
London, Tate Gallery
Los Angeles, CA, Frederick R. Weisman Foundation
Ludwigshafen, Wilhelm-Hack-Museum
Mannheim, Städtische Kunsthalle
Marseille, Musée Cantini
Marseille, Musée d'Art Contemporain
Martigny, Fondation Pierre Gianadda
Milly-La-Forêt (France), Association Le Cyclop
Minneapolis, MN, Walker Art Center
Mönchengladbach, Städtisches Museum Abteiberg
Naoshima (Japan), Naoshima Contemporary Art Museum, Benesse Art Site
New Haven, CT, Yale University Art Gallery
New Haven, CT, Yale University, The Center For Jewish Life
New Orleans, LA, New Orleans Museum of Art
New Orleans, LA, Virlane Foundation
Buffalo, NY, Albright-Knox Art Gallery
New York, NY, Brooklyn Museum
New York, NY, Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met)
New York, NY, Whitney Museum of American Art
Nice, Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain (MAMAC)
Nîmes, Carré d'Art – Musée d'Art Contemporain
Osaka, National Museum of Art Osaka
Oslo, Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art
Paris, Fondation Claude Pompidou
Paris, Fonds National d'Art Contemporain
Paris, Musée National d'Art Moderne – Centre Pompidou
Paris, Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris
Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs
Perth, Art Gallery of Western Australia
Philadelphia, PA, Philadelphia Museum of Art
Philadelphia, PA, University of Pennsylvania
Pittsburgh, PA, Aluminium Company of America
Potsdam, Museum Fluxus+
Princeton, NJ, The Art Museum, Princeton University
Quebec, Musée d'Art de Joliette
Rotterdam, Museum Boymans Van Beuningen
San Diego, CA, Mingei International Museum
San Diego, CA, San Diego Museum of Art
São Paulo, Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo
Zaragoza (Spain), Fundacion Aragonesa Pilar Citoler
Seoul, National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art
Sintra (Portugal), Berardo Collection
St. Gallen (Switzerland), Kunstmuseum
Saint Louis, MO, City Garden, Gateway Foundation
Saint Louis, MO, Laumeier Sculpture Park
Stockholm, Moderna Museet
Taichung (Taiwan), Asia Museum of Modern Art
Thessaloniki (Greece), Macedonian Center of Contemporary Art
Tokyo, Setagaya Art Museum
Tokyo, Benesse Corporation, Tama City
Toulon, Musée d'Art
Turku (Finland), Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova Museum
Ulm (Germany), Medical Center, University of Ulm
Ulm (Germany), Ulmer Museum

Vienna, Museum Moderner Kunst
Washington, D.C., National Museum of Women in the Arts
Washington, D.C., Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art (previously the Corcoran Gallery)
Watari-um (Japan), Watari Museum of Fine Arts
Wattens (Austria), Swarovski Kristallwelten
Wattwiller, Fondation François Schneider

SELECTED WORKS IN PUBLIC SPACES

Le Paradis Fantastique, 1967, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 1967
Le Cyclope, Milly-la-Forêt (France), 1969-1994
Golem (Mifletzet), Collection City of Jerusalem, Kiryat Hayovel, Rabinovitch Park, Jerusalem, 1972
Hannover Nanas (Sophie, Charlotte, Caroline), Hanover, Leibnitz-Ufer (Germany), 1973
Le Poète et sa muse, Universität Ulm, Ulm (Germany), 1978
Le Jardin des Tarots, 1978 – 1998, Pescia Fiorentina, Capalbio, Provincia de Grosseto (Italy), 1978 – 1998
La Sirène, Commanderie de Peyrassol, Flassans-sur-Issole (France), 1983
Sun God, Stuart Collection, University of California, La Jolla (CA), 1983
La Fontaine Stravinsky, Collection de la Ville de Paris, Paris, 1983
Adam & Eve, Universität Ulm, Ulm (Germany), 1985
La Fontaine de Château-Chinon, Collection de la ville de Château-Chinon (France), 1988
Arbre Serpents, Waterfront Park, San Diego (CA), 1988
Le Monde, Collection Kulturforum, Würth (Switzerland), 1989
Chat de Ricardo, Cimetière du Montparnasse, Paris, 1989
Le Grand Oiseau amoureux, Jean Tinguely Museum Collection, Basel, 1989
Oiseau amoureux, Jigyo Central Park, Fukuoka City (Japan), 1990
Fontaine aux Nanas, Asklepios Klinik Harburg, Hambourg, 1991
Grand Oiseau de Feu sur l'Arche, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Charlotte (NC), 1991
Arbre serpents, Collection Benesse Corporation, Tama City, Tokyo, 1992
Le Monstre du Loch Ness, Collection Musée d'Art contemporain, Nice, 1992
La Tempérance, Luxembourg, 1992
Arbre serpents Fontaine, Collection Musée des beaux-arts, Angers, 1992
Oiseau Amoureux Fontaine, Collection City of Duisburg, Duisburg (Germany), 1993
Les Trois Grâces Fontaine, Collection Kolon Industries, Inc., City of Gwacheon, South Korea, 1995
Nana Dansante (bleue), Sculpture Park at Carmen Würth Forum, Künzelsau (Germany), 1995
Noah's Ark Sculpture Park, Collection The Jerusalem Foundation; Tisch Family Zoological Gardens – The Biblical Zoo, Manahat, Jerusalem, 1995 – 2000
Black Nana, Collection Kulturforum, Würth (Switzerland), 1995-2004

Relief, Gallery of Modern Art, Glasgow, 1996
L'Ange Protecteur, Train Station Zürich, 1997
Nana on a dolphin, Hafentheater, Landungsbrücken St. Pauli, Hambourg, 1998
Bear, Collection Forum Würth, Rorschach (Switzerland), 1998
Dragon, Collection Kulturforum Würth (Switzerland) 1998
Oiseau pour Jean-Jacques, Cimetière du Montparnasse, Paris, 1998
Le Poète et sa muse, Collection of Mingei International Museum, San Diego (CA), 1998
Miles Davis, Hôtel Negresco, Nice, 1999
Ricardo Cat, Collection Laumeier Sculpture Park, St. Louis (MO), 1999
19 Baseball Player, 1999, Waterfront Park, San Diego (CA), 1999
Large Seal, 1999, Waterfront Park, San Diego (CA), 1999
Nana Mosaïque Noire, Collection Tarot Garden Foundation, Italy, c.1999
Grotto, Herrenhäuser Gärten, Hanover, 1999 – 2003
Big Nana Blue, Hafentheater, Landungsbrücken St. Pauli, Hambourg, 2000
Large Bull Totem, Collection Forum Würth, Rorschach (Switzerland), 2000
Buddha, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield (UK), , 2000
Pizza Oven, Restaurant Barbarella, La Jolla (CA), 2000
Nikigator, Collection Forum Würth, Rorschach (Switzerland), 2001
Grande Step Totem, California Center for the Arts, Escondido (CA), 2001
Coming Together, San Diego Convention Center, San Diego (CA), 2001
Nikigator, Collection of Mingei International Museum, San Diego (CA), 2001
Queen Califia's Magical Circle, Iris Sankey Arboretum, Escondido (CA), 2003

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Niki Mathews New York Gemälde, Gouachen, Galerie Restaurant Gotthard, St. Gallen (Switzerland), 1956
Salon Comparaisons: Peinture Sculpture, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, 1961, 1962
Feu à Volonté, Galerie J., Paris, 1961
Niki de Saint Phalle, Kjøpcke Gallery, Copenhagen, 1961
Action de tir, Everett Ellin Gallery, Los Angeles, 1962
Séance de Tirs, Malibu Hills, Malibu, 1962
Niki de Saint Phalle, Galerie Rive Droite, Paris, 1962
Niki de Saint Phalle, Alexander Iolas Gallery, New York, 1962, 1965, 1966, 1967
The Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, 1963, 1964
Galerie Alexandre Iolas, Geneva, 1964, 1969
Niki de Saint Phalle, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Galerie Aujourd'hui, Brussels, 1964
Galerie Alexandre Iolas, Paris, 1965, 1968, 1972, 1974
Niki de Saint Phalle: Les Nanas au pouvoir, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1967
Gimpel & Hanover Galerie, Zurich, 1968, 1971

- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Hanover Gallery, London, 1968, 1969
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Werke 1962-1968*, Kunstverein für die Rheinlande Westfalen, Düsseldorf, 1968
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Kunstmuseum, Lucerne (Switzerland), 1969
- Galerie Seriaal, Amsterdam. 1969, 1971
- Les Nanas*, Pavillon Baltard, les Halles, Paris, 1970
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Nana Power*, La Hune, Paris, 1970
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Serigraphien und kleine Skulpturen*, Kammerkunsthalle, Bern, 1971
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Nana Power polykroma skulpturer*, Svensk-Franska Konstgallerier, Stockholm, 1971
- Galerie Bonnier, Geneva, 1972, 1976, 1981, 1987, 1993, 1998
- Gimpel Fils, London, 1972, 1982, 1985, 1988, 1991, 2000
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Festival d'Arles, Monastère de Saint-Trophime, Arles, 1975
- Gimpel & Weitzenhoffer Gallery, New York, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1982, 1985, 1990
- Beelden, modellen en maquettes van Niki de Saint Phalle*, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 1976
- Niki de Saint Phalles sculpturer*, Nordjyllands Kunstmuseum, Aalborg (Denmark), 1976
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Watari Gallery, Tokyo, 1979, 1982
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Objekte-Grafiken*, Bawag Fondation, Vienna, 1980
- Ulm Museum, Ulm (Germany), 1980, 1999
- L'exposition rétrospective de Niki de Saint Phalle*, Musée national d'Art moderne - Centre Pompidou, Paris, 1980
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Retrospektive 1954-1960*, Nuremberg Kunsthalle, Nuremberg, 1980
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Retrospektive 1954-1960*, Haus am Waldsee, Berlin, 1980
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Retrospektive 1954-1960*, Hanover Kunstmuseum, Hanover, 1980
- L'exposition rétrospective de Niki de Saint Phalle*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, 1980
- Niki de Saint Phalle* (opening exhibition), Space Niki, Tokyo, 1980
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Casino Knokke, Knokke-le-Zoute (Belgium), 1985, 1993
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Veistoksja ja reliefejä / Sculptures and reliefs*, Kaj Forsblom Gallery, Helsinki, 1986
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Bilder – Figuren – Phantastische Gärten*, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, Munich, 1987
- Fantastic Vision: Works by Niki de Saint Phalle*, Nassau County Museum of Art, Roslyn, New York, 1987
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Lutte contre le sida*, Musée des Arts décoratifs, Paris, 1990
- Niki de Saint Phalle au Château d'Arsac*, Château d'Arsac, Margaux (France), 1991
- Niki de Saint Phalle: SIDA...Aids*, Galerie Reinhausen des Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museums Duisburg, Duisburg, 1992
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Kunst - und Ausstellungshalle, Bonn, 1992
- Niki de Saint Phalle: L'invitation au musée*, Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, 1992
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Aventure Suisse*, Musée de l'Art et de l'Histoire, Fribourg (Switzerland), 1993
- Les Footballers*, Musée Olympique, Lausanne, 1993
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Dimensions Gallery, Taipei, 1994
- Niki de Saint Phalle* (opening exhibition), Niki Museum, Nasu (Japan), 1994
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Museo Rufino Tamayo, Mexico City. 1995, Touring exhibition: Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Caracas Sofía Imber, Caracas ; Museo de Arte Moderno, Bogotá ; Fundação Casa França-Brasil, Rio de Janeiro ; Pinacoteca do Estado, São Paulo ; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires ; Sala de Exposiciones Edificio CTC, Santiago de Chile
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Graphik und Skulpturen*, Kunstkabinett, Regensburg (Germany), 1996
- Niki de Saint Phalle + Jean Tinguely*, Kunst Raum, Bayreuth (Germany), 1997
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Dear Diary*, Kunstverein, Wolfsburg (Germany), 1997
- Espace Jean Tinguely - Niki de Saint Phalle, Fribourg (Switzerland), 1999, 2006, 2011, 2015, 2018
- Baseball Player & Basketball Player*, San Diego Hall of Champions, Balboa Park, San Diego, 1999
- Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis*, East County Cultural Zone, El Cajon (CA), 2000
- La Fête. Die Schenkung Niki de Saint Phalle. Werke aus den Jahren 1952-2000*, Sprengel Museum, Hanover, 2000. Touring exhibition: Museum Jean Tinguely, Basel
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Les dieux de la musique et du sport*, Écuries Saint-Hugues de Cluny, Cluny (France), 2001
- Niki de Saint Phalle: La vie joyeuse des objets*, Musée de la publicité, Union des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, 2001
- Niki de Saint Phalle: La donation*, Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain, Nice, 2002
- Les Niki de Saint Phalle*, Musée Mandet, Riom (France), 2002
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Siebdrucke und Lithographien 1968 – 2001*, Schloss Landestrost, Neustadt am Rübengebirge (Germany), 2002
- Sprengel Museum, Hanovre (Germany), 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2016
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, Ernst Múzeum, Budapest, 2003
- Niki de Saint Phalle*, National Museum, Krakow, 2003
- Homage to Niki de Saint Phalle*, Caretta Shiodome, Tokyo, 2003
- Zoo Exquis: L'arche Fantastique de Niki de Saint Phalle*, Église de Pontgivart. Auménancourt (France), 2003
- California Center for the Arts Escondido Museum, Escondido (CA), 2004, 2005, 2018
- Niki de Saint Phalle, des assemblages aux œuvres monumentales*, Musée des beaux-arts, Angers (France), 2004
- Niki de Saint Phalle – Early works & prints from the collection of the MAMAC*, Nice, Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Nuremberg, 2004
- Nana Power: Die Frauen der Niki de Saint Phalle*, Schloss Neuardenberg, Berlin, 2005
- Niki de Saint Phalle: Retrospective*, Daimaru Museum, Umeda (Japan), 2006, Touring exhibition: Daimaru Museum, Tokyo ; Nagoya City Art Museum, Nagoya City ; Fukui City Art Museum, Fukui City
- Niki in the Garden: The Extraordinary Sculptures of Niki de Saint Phalle*, Atlanta Botanical Garden, Atlanta, 2006, Touring exhibition: Garfield Park Conservatory, Chicago ; Missouri Botanical Garden, St. Louis

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